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Extracts from the minutes of a
Court Martial held on board the
Diomedé at Sheerness the 29th & 30th
 October 1798 for the Trial of John
 Wright and George Tomms two
 Private Marines belonging to the
 said Ship for Mutinous Conduct &c.

"Thomas Griffiths a private Marine
 "belonging to the Diomedé was sworn.

Question by
 the Prosecutor } "Do you know that the Prisoners
 "took or offered any oath or oaths to
 "others?"

Answer: "Yes, They did both to me.

2^d "What was the nature of that oath?"

Ans: "To carry the Ship into an Enemy's
Port."

2^d "Do you know that the Prisoners
 "were united, or that they had any
 "correspondence with societies united
 "for treasonable purposes, on shore
 "or on board?"

Ans: "Yes, they were corresponding with
societies at Nottingham."

2^d "What was the nature & substance
 "of what the Prisoners said relative
 "to those societies?"

Ans: "They said if I would agree with
 "them, I should have money to sup-
 "port me from Nottingham."

2^d "Did you ever read any letters
 "addressed to the prisoners from Not-
 "tingham?"

Ans:

Ans. Yes, one.

Q. What was the purport of that letter?

Ans. It was that Lord Cornwallis had
gone into Ireland, and they hoped he
would meet with a fatal blow before
he came back. The letter was from
a brother of Geo. Tomms, dated at
Nottingham and addressed to him.
Geo Tomms (the Prisoner) shew'd me
his letter.

Q. Was there any thing else in the letter
relative to any revolution taking
place in England?

A. No.

Q. Did you ever hear the prisoners say
that they expected a revolution would
take place in England?

A. Yes, I heard them both say so, if
there should come a peace.

Q. Did you ever hear either of the
prisoners purpose or devise an insur-
rection in the Dominion?

Ans. Yes Tomms the prisoner said if
three parts of the Ships Company
would hold with them.

Q. Did you ever hear any disloyal
toasts given, and were they given by
the prisoners, and what were the toasts?

A. I heard Tomms drink a health
that may the blessings of liberty never
flourish 'til they are washed in the
blood of death spots.

Q. "Do you know if the Prisoner Wright
"belonged to any Corresponding Society
"at Nottingham?"

A. "No. -

Q. "Did the prisoners expect a war
"or desire that a Revolution might
"take place?"

A. "Yes both of them.

Q. "Did you see a signature to the
"letter you have mentioned that
"Tomms received from Nottingham,
"and what was the signature?"

A. "I saw the name of Tomms, but
"I don't ~~know~~ recollect the Christian
"name. It was from his brother at
"Nottingham. The prisoner told me
"it was from his brother. The letter
"began Dear Brother or Loving Bro-
"ther.

Serjeant Daniel Alexander, was
sworn.

Q. "Did you ever hear either of the
"prisoners propose or devise an
"insurrection in the ship?"

A. "I heard George Tomms drink
"two Healths. The one was, May the
"blessings of liberty never flourish
"till they are washed in Death spots:
"The other was Ryland's Ball - which

is the beginning of it, but I don't know
exactly the remainder. I remarked
it, that it was not friendly to Govern-
ment.

Q. Did Griffiths tell you anything
further of the Prisoners plan?

A. Yes, he said they had correspond-
ence by writing somewhere in the
country, but he did not say where.
Griffiths told me it was a disguised
correspondence, and that their
wives and families were to be
supported from the Country.

James Hughes a Private charmer
was sworn -

Q. Did you ever hear the Prisoners
express anything about a revolu-
tion in the country?

A. I heard Tomms say he should
not belong out of France, for that
he was of three trades, and a great
deal of money was to be got by a
man who was of three trades.

The foregoing are faithful Extracts from the
minutes of the before mentioned Court Martial
taken by me

Benjamin Judge Advocate
on the occasion.

Sheerness 30. Oct. 1796

30 October 1798

John Wright and George Tomms
were put upon their defence.

John Wright said (among other things)
"he had enlisted in Leicester about
"six weeks only before he joined the
"Diomedes. That he was by trade
"a Baker and Maltster. That he was
"at Nottingham about nine months
"ago. That he knew nobody there.
"That he had lived at Birmingham
"and knew Mr Ryland a Wire Manu-
"facturer there."

George Tomms said he had a
"brother living at Nottingham, and
"that he knew only one other person
"there Mr John King of Narrow Marsh
"Nottingham."

Tomms produced a written
defence of which the following is
an Extract. -

"About the 6. of September or
"the 8.th as I was at dinner under the
"Half deck, Griffiths asked me how the
"people of Nottingham went on. I
"asked him what people, or if he had
"any Person there that he knew or was
"acquainted with, he said no, his reason

for

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"for asking me this Question was that
"he had heard there was many people
"there that was against the war, and
"he said that there was a great many
"at Birmingham of the same mind,
"and in addition to this conversation
"he said he knew one Mr Ryland, that
"had persuaded several men to go
"into the government service, even
"as far as the East & West Indies in
"order to discover the state of affairs
"belonging to the service, and had also
"been curious enough to buy several
"of, from the East Indies and different
"parts at the considerable sum of
"several hundred pounds, and that
"Mr Ryland & his friends was acquaint-
"ed with several members of Parlia-
"ment, who had assisted in the business,
"and he also added that the people
"in connection with Mr Ryland, fre-
"quented particular public houses, once
"or twice a week to conduct or manage
"or settle their affairs, and he likewise
"added that he was one of their society
"and he told me that the sign they knew
"each other by was by raising the left
"hand & rubbing or stroking it more
"properly, over the lower part of the
"face & nose on the left side. and he
"also said if I would write a letter and
"sign my name he would sign it

"to it and send it to Mr. Ryland, that
 "he would buy my discharge and
 "remit me money to carry me home
 "if I would join their Society, and I think
 "in part of his evidence he mentioned
 "my giving a Toast about Ryland's
 "ball, but instead of me, it was him
 "that gave that toast."

The foregoing is a faithful Extract
 from the Minutes of the before mentioned
 Court-Martial taken by me

Benjⁿ Stow Judge Adv.
 on the occasion.

Sheerness
 30. Octob. 1798 -

Admiralty Office, 2 Nov 1798

Sir,

In addition to my Letter to
you of yesterday's date; I am commanded
by my Lords Commissioners of the
Admiralty to transmit to you, for the
information of the Duke of
Portland, the substance of the
Examination of Thomas Griffiths
a private Marine on board His
Majesty's Ship Diomedes.

I am,

Sir,

Your most humble Servant

Evan Neave

William Wickham Esq

Kent, south,

The Information of Thomas Griffiths a Private Marine on board His Majesty's Ship Diomedé who upon his Oath saith

That he was born at Upper Arley in the County of Stafford is twenty two years of age was apprentice to and served his full time to Richard Brown of the same place Shoemaker - That on the 16.th August 1795 he enlisted with Serjeant Turner at Alcey Wake in the County of Shropshire to serve as a private Soldier in the Oxford Fusible Light Dragoons - That after serving in that Regiment about Eight Months his discharge was purchased by his Father with whom he returned to Arley and worked at his Business of Franketting or Bucket making - That he continued with his Father till the latter end of January 1798 when he enlisted with Serjeant White of the Chatham Division of Marines at Kidderminster in the County of Worcester where the Informant had been some Days upon Business - That he joined the Division at Chatham and remained there until he was embarked on board the Diomedé of Fifty Guns at the Nore on the 28.th June last - That he was at Sea in the said Ship cruising in the North Sea (occasionally coming to anchor) from that time until she came to Sheerness about the middle of this Month - That during the said Cruise he messed with John Wright, George Tomms, Michael Gogan

James Hughes Privates and Edward Vasey
 Corporal of Marines - That after they had been
 at sea five or six weeks as this Informant
 one Evening about four or five o'clock was sitting
 in his berth next to the Gun Room on the Starboard
 side Tomms came down and joined him -
 That they began talking about their respective
 Countries when Tomms asked him if he had
 ever been at Nottingham to which this Informant
 replied - No - Tomms then asked him if he
 was a Republican to which this Informant
 said he did not understand the meaning of
 the word, but asked Tomms why he asked the
Question to which Tomms replied "that he was
one" and so was Wright and then explained
 to him what it meant, adding that if he
 the Informant would become one that they
 could recommend him to some very good
 Gentlemen at Nottingham who would support
 him after he had got his discharge which
 Tomms supposed the Informant would apply
 for as he had been ruptured by falling off
 the gangway and done no duty upon Deck for
 several weeks - The Informant gave no other
 answer to Tomms than merely saying he would
 consider of it upon which Tomms went upon
 Deck leaving the Informant below in the
 berth - That after the Hammocks were got down
 that Evening as the Informant with Sergeant
 Alexander and John Wright were sitting in
 the berth Tomms came down again and joined
 them upon coming into the berth Tomms told them

his right Hand and offered to shake Hands
 with Wright upon which Wright said - No
 and then Wright and Tomms shook each other
 by the left Hand - This Tomms had in his
 former Conversation with the Informant
 explained to him was the sign between
Republicans and that if he was ever to go
to Nottingham he would find that there
all the Republicans shook each other by the
left Hand and that he the Informant would
^{thereby} know the Republicans from the Churchmen -
 That being Saturday Night and having from
 the Night before saved their allowance of
 wine they sat drinking and the following
 amongst other Toasts were drunk - first by Tomms
 - "May the wings of Liberty never flourish till
washed with Death Spots." then by the Serjeant
 - "May the Enemies of Great Britain be turned
into Foxes and the Devil find Hounds to hunt
them" and this Informant gave "May the Devils
sweep Hell with the National Convention of
France and afterwards burn the Broom"
 The Informant recollects something but
 imperfectly of another Toast which was drunk
 that Night - It was about Ryland's Ball -
 which induced the Informant to ask if it
 was Ryland of Birmingham to which Tomms
said - yes - he is the Person who supplies our
Party with arms - That from this time till
about the middle of August Tomms almost
daily said something to the Informant
upon the Subject of making a Party on
board the ship for the purpose of sailing
 away

away with her. That he (Tomms) and Wright were as one and that three parts of the Ship's Company would join them. That several of them had been sworn and it would be well for the Informant to do so too. That Informant in hopes of getting something particular out of Tomms never actually rejected his proposals but rather gave him reason to believe that in time he might be brought to join them but about the middle of August as the Informant was looking out of the Port of the Birth Tomms came to him and proposed in a very earnest manner that he the Informant should swear to join in seizing the Ship and carrying her into an Enemy's Port which he positively refused to do and from that time Tomms was constantly abusing this Informant.

This Informant further saith that while they were at Sea about the beginning of September a Cutter joined them and brought Letters for the Officers and Ships Company. Tomms by this conveyance received one and asked the Informant to lend him a Penny to pay for it. Tomms opened it and gave it to Wright to read at which moment the Informant had to carry Lieutenant Wilkinson's sword Belt up into the Ward Room and therefore left Wright and Tomms reading the Letter in the Birth. After putting on the Lieutenants Belt the Informant returned below to his birth where he still found Tomms and Wright. And the former putting the Letter into Informants Hand asked him to read it which

which he did - Tomms at the same time remarking that it came from his Brother who was a Member of a Corresponding Society at Nottingham. Informant recollects perfectly that the Letter was dated - Nottingham - and began with - Dear Brother - or Loving Brother - (Informant cannot positively say which) and then gave an account to Tomms of his Wife and Family and Family concerns and concluded as nearly as Informant can possibly recollect with observing that Lord Cornwallis was gone to Ireland and they (meaning as this Informant supposed and verily believed the Corresponding Society of which Tomms had said his Brother was a Member) hoped ^{he} ~~they~~ would meet with a fatal blow before he came back again.

The Letter was signed - Tomms - but the Christian Name Informant will not now undertake to swear to though to the best of his recollection it was either - William - or John. - He is however positive as to its being signed - Tomms - and beginning as he said before with - Dear Brother - or Loving Brother - and containing the aforesaid Paragraph relative to Lord Cornwallis's Expedition into Ireland and was superscribed to George Tomms Private Marine on board His Majesty's Ship Diomedé Yarmouth Roads or elsewhere.

Informant was then interrogated and answered as follows:

Q Did Tomms ever tell you or say in your hearing that his Brother or any other of the Corresponding Society at Nottingham had adopted any Plan by employing Persons on board Ships of the Fleet to debauch the minds of the Ships Companies?

A - No -

Q Did he ever say any thing in your hearing that inclined you to believe such a Plan had been adopted?

A From what passed between me and Tomms I certainly believed he was employed for that purpose and as he told me that he could be supplied with what Money he wanted from the Society at Nottingham I concluded if they would employ him that others in other Ships might be employed by them also and it seemed the more likely to me as I know there is a great many recruits for the Marines from Nottingham.

Q Did you ever hear any other Person belonging to the Diomedes say any thing that induced you to believe that Tomms had made the same attempt upon them as he did upon you?

A I never heard any body say any thing upon this Subject but Wright and Tomms as they made a practice of selling almost all their allowance of wine to Daniel Ward and — Marshall of the after Guard with whom also they were frequently in private conversation I suspected that those two were in the secret and do believe that

7
 they know more of the matter than ever Tomms explained to me. And now I remember also that Tomms told me Michael Gogan (our other Mesmate) was a united Irishman therefore as good as a Republican.

2 As you had been so long tampered with by Tomms and had determined from the beginning not to join with him how came you so long to delay making known to the Lieutenant the intention of Tomms to make a Party for running away with the Ship?

A I let it alone from time to time in hopes of finding out the names of some of the men whom Tomms said had been sworn but he refused to let me know their names unless I would first be sworn myself which having positively refused when he proposed it to me (as I have before stated) I then was afraid to keep it a secret any longer.

Informant adds that from his observation of the behaviour of the Ship's company he really believes that Tomms and Wright had made a considerable progress amongst them and that if he had not made known their intention to Lieutenant Wilkinson the greatest danger was to be apprehended.

Sworn at Sheerness
 this 31st October 1798
 before me

(signed) Thomas Griffiths

(signed)

A. Graham.

A Copy

To the Right Honorable William Wickham, 449
The Memorial of James Hillis of Dublin, Merchant.
Sheweth,

That your Memorialist is extensively in the
Lion Trade in Dublin, and Imports several Cargoes Annually

447
W. Napier presents his compliments
to W. Wickham, and acquaints him,
in answer to his Note of this date,
that on the 2^d Inst. observations were sent
to Mr. Götting, the Commander, to
take such steps as may be proper
for releasing the Swedish Vessel Christian
Church.

Respectfully
5 Nov. 1798.

Wickham,
with
Hapell
Fleet
may,
at last,
suffered
of three
thousand
heavy
is Credit,

To the Right Honorable William Wickham, 449
The Memorial of James Stiles of Dublin, Merchant.
Sheweth,

That your Memorialist is extensively in the
Iron Trade in Dublin, and Imports several Cargoes Annually
from Stockholm, on his own Account.

That a Vessel called the Christiana Elizabeth,
C. F. Bergman Master, was Chartered at Stockholm, & loaded with
Iron & Deals by Mem^t Correspondents, Mess^{rs} Bohman, Hapell
& Georges, on Mem^t Account; and was Captured with a Fleet
of Swedish Vessels, by His Majesty's Ship, the Romney,
John Lawford Esq^r Commander, about the 8th of August last,
and now lays in the River of London.

That your Mem^t has suffered
extremely by the detention of this Cargo, (being now a period of three
months), for which Mem^t has paid upwards of three thousand
Pounds: a Sum so considerable to Mem^t, with other heavy
engagements, as might have caused the destruction of his Credit,
as a Merchant, for ever.

That your Mem^t presented a

Memorial to Lord Castlereagh, on the affair, about
three Weeks ago, which Mem^t was informed had been
forwarded to you, Sir.

That Mem^t has been compelled, (to the
material injury of his Business at Home,) to come to London
to claim that, which is so very justly & fairly his Right; &
which, he can produce the Strongest possible proofs
imaginable.

That your Mem^t having assisted all in
his power to support the Government of Ireland, since
first establishment of the Yeomanry; and more particularly
during the Rebellion, by day & by Night, at the risk
of life & property; consider his case as peculiarly deserving
indeed.

Mem^t therefore, humbly entreats, you will
be so good, Sir, to cause a speedy liberation of his Case
(a part of which is much ^{wasted} for Government use in Ireland,) &
afford him such reasonable compensation, as the heavy
injuries he has sustained, may justly entitle him to.

London Coffee House
5 Nov. 1798.